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SERMON TO MYSELF

The squeeze.
Anxiety is endless,
the wire wound around
every hour. Based
on wrong view—
if you hold clear
the meaning of karma
(action and result)
no ground left for
rootless anxiety.
Nothing will happen
but what is already
entrained, it’s in
the system. Worry
instead about
the next thing you do.
Everything else is done.

1 February 2017
Skipping spaces
like a kid of the sidewalk
covering ground
without touching same—
the dance.

Interpret the earth
beneath you,
listening with your feet
and hips and shoulders—
the dance.

By leaving the earth a second
you hear it suddenly clear.

1 February 2017
Blue sky
be good to me
let some
snow go,
some friends
come to see.

2.
Pray to the weather
because it is.
It answers by
letting me.

3.
It can’t be as simple as I seem.
Measures don’t work that way.
Every foot in every mile
has to be passed through,
no leap allowed, heaven happens
only inch by inch.

4.
Snow is water
or water’s daughter
in her wedding gown
marrying everyone at once.
1 February 2017
Too many things
to be so few.
Paper, absorb me!
I count on no one,
not even the number tree
wherever it grows.
Tired eyes rhapsodize.

1 / 2 February 2017
Evil can’t just be resisted. It must be drained and he hollow places it leaves in heart and mind be filled with kindness, beginnings, creation, joy.

1 / 2 February 2017
When you sing
you have to use a different voice.
And you have to sing.

It could be the voice of your friend
or the voice of your own hand
holding the hand of a friend

and what a high shrill tender voice
your own hand has,
you hardly recognize the sounds it makes

but it is singing, real singing,
the way the touch of it sings
on a lover’s thigh or a lover’s hand

until it all is singing
and the beasts fall away
snarling in the terrible sound

of their actual voices and never a song.

1 February 2017
after Billie’s dream
What to say
to a friend’s bed,
a new bed,
the kind we learned
from zen manuals to use
to lie flat on the ground

but soft, soft,
the way the ground is,
really, always ready,
a bed is always ready,
its coverlet is red
to remind,

  a futon
we call it, sounds like foutre,
foutrons, let’s fuck,
let;’s talk to the bed
make it ready, high
ceremonial magic
of people at midnight
going to sleep, they
sound like the earth
ready to bear us again,

the color of sleep is red
she said, she knows
the dream said so, a dream
is what the bed says,
no dream worth anything
unless it comes truly
from the voice of the bed.
Didn’t you know that
everything talks? How
on earth could a bed
be silent when all night
it studies what the body says?

1 February 2017
after Billie’s dream
Mysterious cloud births
so many women from the sky
advantage me,

they all are verbs and ever do —
a verb won’t stop
just for the weather —

wherefore I have built
my cathedral out of wantonness,
each stone of it doing
what it will and what it wants
because it must. Like
the spire you see above it, I too
am anchored in that sky.

2 February 2017
Montaigne’s mother was Jewish
no wonder he was smart.
I wonder what part his father played
or the mountain or the sweet white wine.

2 February 2017
Infantility of great men —
unless you can be a child
all your life yu’ll never grow up,

never reach the fullness
of your design. Childness
is the infrastructure, the base.

Keep it intact, feed it with
ice cream and bizarre desires.

3 February 2017
There came a silent day.
Who knew the vague clouds
could say so little?

Or was I just not listening?
Or listening with the wrong ear:
we have so many ways of hearing,

arms and hands and legs,
shoulders, belly, lap — so
many mysterious organs.

3 February 2017
THE SYSTEM

Birds in the trees
so many,
how many
words are there
in the Bible
and why?

And why
is there only
one sky?

3 February 2017
Rhinebeck
Sound
of something
I can’t name,
strange sound.
What does sound
really do? Does
it feed on us?

3.II.17, Rhinebeck
Valentine hearts
all over the wall,
beta-blockers, ACE
inhibitors on the shelf.
We live by signs.

3.II.17, Rhinebeck
As if the other side finally got here —
turn the flower over
turn the air over
and remember who you really are,
who you really love.

3 February 2017
Rhinebeck
There is a little eye in things that lets them see you too.

    Seeing
is not easy.

    Memory
gets in the way,
then seeps into now
and the bird flies away.

3 February 2017
Rhinebeck
Orchestral Interlude:

Circumstances just stand around, circus dances prance. Any minute now the music will stop and the singing start. The tune is almost enough to hear. Look around, the people are almost here too.

3 February 2017
Rhinebeck
Blue map of the whole ocean.

Be not concerned with counting islands—

love makes its own mainland, safe frontiers, a native language not too hard to learn.

3 February 2017
Rhinebeck
1. Round him cold spreads out, vector of arctic he, a dagger from the unseen elsewhere piercing the day.

2. We bring with us what we are and we write letters to the world we dare them to read what we are being all day long.

3 February 2017
Rhinebeck
Illustrious outsiders everywhere and all the stay at home geniuses meet once every year for croquet discovering once gain sad principles of percussion, inertia and collision. The game goes on for nine months and is called education or school—it mimics the inner process in Women whereby more geniuses come to guide and play with us anew.

4 February 2017
Grandiose embellishments on the harp of the noise the child makes when the family doctor tells it to say “Ah.” Not good to leave a simple sound alone—must challenge is with overtones, naso-pharyngeal hoots, slobbering grunts on the double bass, strings shivering all over the place. Drum. By then the sound is lost and so should be—we can't put up with much simplicity, can't pretend we never built cathedrals or that those apple trees grow by themselves.

4 February 2017
Of course you
root cause of it
crack in the sky

inside the mirror
another mirror
shows a different out

dthis comes of identity
of numbers
when the sky was only.

4 / 5 February 2017
It’s Sunday morning
it’s as if it’s Sunday morning
cars quieter and sky
skyer, far
No colors
It’s as if there are
no colors in the world
but everything visible
everything different

Light is a grand sermon
giver, like to generalize
show us the way

Light shows the way

Light shows through the paper
the obstinate child
reads the future backwards
through the page

the future printed on the next page
the obstinate child resists the lure
of the immediate, the easy

It's as if it's Sunday morning
and I'm ordinary again,

it's ordinary around me too

the quiet cars the fallen snow.

5 February 2017
COLOR

Hold this color to the light
and it will tell
all the places it has been
to look at you now
this very way,

    Hill of Tara,
’49 Chevy in the rain,
alligator pear, the lawn
at Blithewood on a mercy day—

a mercy day
now what is that
no sun no rain
not cold not hot

You sit on the lawn and watch the trees
forgiving everyone. That color green.

5 February 2017
I dare not tell that dream,  
the dream took place  
in the old language,  
with grass and trees  
and lean-tos in mild weather,  
the dream was full  
of natural things I dare not  
mention, naked things  
and things half-smiling  
in their sleep or were they  
really awake just testing me,  
you can’t talk about things  
like that these days, things  
get old like language too,  
old things, old trees, old  
meanings of our bodies,  
nothing can be said of these.

5 February 2017
Embassy from the other
as if this side were not
enmeshed in discourse already—

every word a manifesto!

But still they come
calling the mind’s eye
by flirt of vowel
or alluring ambiguity—

morning after morning
wake into what is said.

6 February 2017
Easy enough
to answer no question.
I do it all the time
and here’s one more.

6 February 2017
Precipices we have known without falling: none.

Basements we have chosen not to inspect: few.

But o the attics full of dust and danger weird sunlight seen in no other place—

I will not clamber up those creaking steps.

6 February 2017
Try to be warm

cushion to the bone.

Sunlight on the snow.

Move the way the bare
hibiscus shivers slow
in this chill breeze.

Things come and go
but you, you animal
of eloquence and repose,
emulate a stone.

One with carvings on it
in a lost language,
fruit trees and goddesses,
most of their faces
worn away with time.
The woods in the wind
make the sound of a train
passing through slow.
All senses deceive us,
confuse us, entertain.
The shadow of my hand
a swan’s broad web.
Don’t believe what you see.

6 February 2017
The moral privilege of morning
a silk foulard on the whole day.
For half an hour or an hour
it’s all right to say what you mean,
write what you think. After that
button up the system. Hide in language
so the words can have their morning too.

6 February 2017
GRANDEES

Who are the grandees who over us umbelliferate ski-happy in rain sky?

Bracket my question and serve it for lunch so the dignitaries of Local Wit can chew it fine and spit it out and then we’ll see.

Not. “Easy Answers (There are none)” T.M. the poet wrote. Pigeons n cities crows in countryside. That’s close as we’ve gotten to the truth.

7 February 2017
Ambushes and predicates—
I read you from across the room
sea-worthy guesswork, plumb lines
to the core of beryl.

Jewel me
I have no religion,
only practice, only worship—
something thrilling in the blood.

Ideas lie in wait for us.
No skill required. They repose,
propose, impose and we’re done.

Baptized by exhaustion,
the mind sleeps. Dreams speak.
They alone decipher us but they don’t tell.

7 February 2017
Could they be here already
the gods we call Greek?
Or never left us, amused
at how we changed their names
and forgot their curious smiles?

And then that Persian flower came
we call the rose, unknown to the Greeks,
and somehow that changed everything:
gods abide but flowers come and go.

But how to build a temple to the rose?
Or are we born with one already in us
and only theologians fail to notice it?

7 February 2017
IRISH

Our blood is exile.

Such Irish as we are are not Konquering Kelts but hedge-folk, see it in your eyes, my eye-bones, we're from before the world, or before this world Cro-Magnon ruddy folk pushed to the very edge of Europe (you rope squeezing us tight), Norway, Ireland, or pale dark-haired pre-Saxns squeezed north to the frozen Baltic I have walked on that sea.

Don't worry. The blood is exile always. The king Cu Chullain served was king only by his wife's permission -- that is the secret, glorious secret of the Irish — a matriarchy that set its Drones out on display and watched what they did. And what they did turned into the stories the secret queens told. The mothers. The seal women from the sea.

What I'm saying is that we are the genetic descendants of those stories -- not the slack scrotas of mustache-chewing papas. We are born from telling.

7 February 2017
Or sometimes we have to make a story of it
to gild the garbage so we can bear
to live a day longer on a planet where
we let such things happen to us.
Or they just do. And fiction is our only weapon
in a land and system that despises truth.
So we tell ourselves this death means
something, and that death, all the deaths,
rapes, robberies, deceptions, abandonings,
we make up stories so we can live with them
until the wound closes and the scars look
only pale and vaguely interesting and
then we can tell how we came by the wound
and tell the new story that we call the real.

7 February 2017
DOCH ANGSTLOS LEBEN WIR?

If I could just endure
the beauty of the thing I see

snowfield sunrise picture
people walking in their quiet glory

long avenue arrowing into evening
the north star over Penikese

and not doubt each one, not turn
from them to my secret worry

ever-changing hell guess of the moment.

7 February 2017
Did I ever tell you about the children?
They wait behind or sometimes right inside
the green hedges all along the road.
That country is sometimes this one.
They come in different sizes, infants, sturdy
adolescents, soft-faced pigtailed wanderers,
all kinds. They say nothing out loud
but you can hear them when you pass
along that road, walking slow, or even driving,
you hear them as pictures in your head,
fears, desires, parts of your own body
you’re suddenly aware of without knowing why.
Or their bodies, projected as images
across the mind’s sky, you know, the way
we visualize people real or imaginary
we think. But everything imagined is real.
Whatever is made up is true. I know this
because voices of the children told me so.

7 February 2017
WHAT THE DARK TOLD ME

He stares at the coffee pot
a good image to carry with him
a good thing
on his ourney to the Sun.

And how bright She is today
and every liquor speaks her
clearly, even this black
miracle in his coffee cup.

7 / 8 February 2017
ZAMZAM

_In deserto:_
when a woman
walks into the desert
a pool or well or spring
stands up
from her footstep
by the hypothesis of myth.
Myth means saying.
Means telling.
Tale. Tell
what she found in the desert.
Follow her trail. Tale, Tell.

7 / 8 February 2017
Speakable deeds
and other Iliads
should not linger
in the mind’s heart.

Let it be a lady place
where following the thread
of narrative was all
that counted, no deaths,

no cities burnt down.
Just the mild faces
of the ordinary things,
sea and hill and road

and home for supper,
a hand you love or
like at least stroking
your bare shoulder.

7 / 8 February 2017
= = = = =

We have wings but we can’t fly—why? Holding one another close is our special sky.

7 / 8 February 2017
THE SEVEN OF CUPS

They sprawl around the room in lassitudes of drunkenness. The room is very large, boundless in fact, and the cups are very small. One or two still stand upright, full beside a sleeper's arm. There is someone looking in the window from very far away. Is this you? Is the card after all made of glass? By the fireplace a cat is snoozing, no drunker than usual. Bend low now and stroke its fur.

7 / 8 February 2017
Enough ink left
for a rll in the hay
but who. But who.
We fall in love
with identities, we
have none of my own.

7 / 8 February 2017
CANTING TOWARDS THE OUTER PLANETS

the slip of mind
silks across the system.
Beyond repair
it weaves anew self
out of that *black light*
my uncle discovered
in his cellar. We find
things where we can.
Went down the creaky steps
and there it was: the hum
of darkness all around him
and his mind lit up.

*Having lamps, they give them to others*
famous Greek motto.
we give what we know.
We give what we can.
Storybook found in the garbage,
the same cup of coffee
again and again. Once
we get there, past Neptune,
we should finally be here.

8 February 2017
Name a country
where the moon does not shine.
Huntinghorns all night long
but at dawn no blood on the snow.
Nothing to remind you of the dark.

8 February 2017
I had a principle to follow once
a guiding Girl Scout t
hrough dingy woodlots
Ohio, Michigan. She
or it led me to a clearing
where no one had ever stood.
A virgin earth and me
a shy bridegroom of that place,
inert, boorish, but much in love,
enraptured by the lovely
emptiness of things.

8 February 2017
THE SEVEN OF WANDS

She is running
running across a field
running towards or running from?
How can we know.
Running. Things
we do not know.

She has cast off
her last religions,
motivations, intentions,
desires. She is just running.
Just being.

At the far, far edge of the field
a forest. Its trees.
The trees are also sticks, staves,
wands. uncountably many.

She has to be running,
she knows that running has to be done,
the sticks she used to rub together
not so many years ago told her
when she tried to make them burn,

she runs so fast
the air almost catches fire,
fire is friction is air is wood
is what is left of human will
when plans are scrapped
and clocks are thrown away,
fire.

Seven wands. Seven trees.
Seven shadows stretch towards her
over the clover grass, they stretch out
to meet her, she runs deep into every one.

8 / 9 February 2017
End of Notebook 399
SUMMMONING DOORS

Opening the door
moves air
you see.

The stanzas of difference
stretch out across your house,
any house, any you.
I hold you now n my—
No. The door
is not about that, the door
pushes air away, lets you
(any me) breathe
my way in.

That’s he secret
practice, the yoga of doors.

2.
Open this, it will all be there—
the hidden rhyme, your lover’s
favorite shampoo, your grandma’s
original London accent,
smell of the river,
half a mile away you smell it,
that flowing south,
the wash
of sea tide breasting against it—
this contradiction
is your house.

3.
Open the door to it
and find peace
that only constant struggle brings,
lifelong,

    snowflakes in a blizzard,
this one, each day a crystal
of it, efficacious, perfect, gone.

9 February 2017
POEMA

Put on your glasses
to see the mist better.
Reach out and run
your fingers through it
until you smell the rose.

9 February 2017
The snow I shoveled off the deck
wind blew right back—
there has to be a song in that.
But who will sing it?
music is naked even in such weather.

9 February 2017
Could it be beyond the happening—
ask Paul about the system, he told
the Romans hell tell you.

Don’t put on that coat—
naked people sexy because they tell the truth?
They are the truth.

Paul knows. Shipwrecked today
on Malta, not a very cold island,
and yet. Weird language, but ground
under his feet at last. Our feet.
The earth is part of the system,
gravity and law books and how you dress.

Shake off attachment before it bites,
the fangs of the system are terrible.
Chop the system off before it does the same to you.

9 February 2017
INTERLINEAR TO THREE DREAMS OF BILLIE’S

1.

It was night. We were standing at the edge of a swimming pool and planning to swim. Then I noticed that the pool filter was choked with leaves and debris and in fact the whole pool was full of leaves and twigs, and there were some “creatures” in the pool too. Besides that I could see that the weather was worse than I thought and the pool was flooded - water was beginning to stream over the sides, quite a strong current. Without thinking I decided to leap to the other side of the pool, where I thought I could clear out the filter. I fell just short of the side into the water. It was cool, not as scary as I thought and I was able to lift myself out into the very clear water running over the side. I looked back to see if you were going to cross over and swim too, but you were gone.

Of course I was gone.
I fear water of that kind, 
pure, fresh from its hidden springs. I thought you’d have known me — I was the creatures in the muck, I was the twigs and leaves and countless filthy things besides. You leapt over me, transcended what I was, the principle of lust that hides in everything. Don’t you know that what you saw was just a glass of wine, sticky sweet from Portugal, and you drank the whole glass down and so the clear glass showed the bare rim of itself, where no one stood. And I was safe inside you by that time.
2.

You and I were having a conversation. You were telling me that you were going to a Jungian analyst in Northampton. She was able to put you in a dream state so that when you woke in her office, you could tell her your “very fresh dreams.” You said that you were going to see her five days in a row and that you expected to clear out everything no longer of use to you in that time and “make a fresh start.”

I lay on her couch but she was no analyst. She was an Irish harper by family tradition and she kept playing while I tried to sleep. O god I was tired of music! Especially this, twanging and plucking and tinny reverb and I had to lie there five days and nights to get my money’s worth of what she called love. Sometimes I get so tired of love and all love’s clever agencies to haunt my dreams. Dreams! I can make up better dreams awake than she and her night people ever grant me. Grrr. I wanted her body and what I got was the sound of her fingers on strings of tin.
We were taking a walk at night, it was very dark, moonless, and I had a flashlight that was quite dim casting only a small circle of light ahead of us. As we walked the edges of the circle of light suddenly illuminated some wolves by the side of the road but they were quiet, lying down, just watching us. We were a little scared, walked slightly faster, but didn’t run. Then some more wolves, eating an animal, their prey. Other small animals too, I couldn’t identify, more and more of them. We were able to stay calm, didn’t run. Suddenly we came out of the pitch dark into bright moonlight. We were at a crossroads, three roads and there was fresh snow over everything. One tree was coated with ice, sparkling and clear in the moonlight. I was very thirsty and realized I could get a drink from licking the ice. I reached out and touched a branch and my bare hand stuck to the ice for a second. I laughed because I had forgotten that could happen. The sky was marvelous, with clouds drifting across the moon. Very quiet, magical.

She reached out

to a tree made out of light,
this kind of light
takes all your thirst away

Shelicked her fingers,
cold, the man in the moon
looked lecherously down
and she was suddenly alone
at a crossroad, wolves
not far away in mind,
a wolf is memory,
a wolf is a lecherous moon
pretending to sleep in the sky.

She knows all that,
she’s not scared, or not very.
Magic is always unsettling,
that’s its job,
to alienate the evident.
Wait. What about the woman, what about the tree, the light, the ice, the snow, why is it always winter, didn’t someone come with her from the house or town or where do people come from, where do they go.

She licks her hand again and begins to understand that she has always understood but often pretends not to, the way when all alone sometimes one smiles in the dark.

9 February 2017
Without even using a mirror
I talked with myself.
Not much harder than shaving,
say, though less productive
of clear surfaces. Go back
to sleep and try again—
the rain from Enschede to Hamburg,
eating grouper north of Tampa,
all those immensely productive
mistakes you’ve ever made—
creation is one more accident.

9 / 10 February 2017
Dry quiet cold day.
Back to the wall
enjoy the wall.
Every stone in it
a different history.

2.
I mean history is what you make up
to ease the pain, history is fantasy,
detailed memory of what never happened.
Or Freud is the father of history.

3.
Nothing ever happened
did it? The wall
is made of air.
We prison one another.
History is blaming the rope not the hangman.

10 February 2017
Staved in barrel
from the age of wood.
Wheel spinning
all alone in a ditch—

why do we wake hungry,
what work have we been doing in sleep
that drained so much energy?

Let dreams be fattening.
Let the nutritious dark
strengthen unconscious muscles
so we wake all banqueted afresh.

Thus he prayed, but on Olympus
some god laughed and turned away.

10 February 2017
FAUX-RÊVE No. 1
We’re walking on a railroad trestle stretching half a mile over water between river and lagoon. We see right below us, as we’re roughly halfway over, a rowboat, empty, bumping up against a piling. At the same moment we hear a train coming our way. We jump down into the boat, and the train roars past, only a few feet above and beyond us. We’re safe. But when the train has passed, we see that we’ve floated some distance away from the trestle. And there are no oars in the boat. We look at each other and wonder what to do.

FAUX-RÊVE No.2
A man and a woman are naked, together, sheltering under a rough lean-to on a hillside. Nice weather, Lots of people around, all friends or acquaintances, none disturbed or affected by the nakedness of the two. And shelter isn’t necessary, really, but she likes being in there, sloping roof above her, a hillside full of friends all around. The man moves in and out of the shelter, sometimes lying with her, sometimes wandering around talking to people or bringing food back to her. Sometimes I am the man, sometimes someone else I don’t know is the man. The woman is always the same — slim, small, lying on her right side, smiling.

10 February 2017
THE SEVEN OF COINS

A man sits on the ground
a small Turkish rug in front of him.
On it seven big golden coins.
People pass, look at him,
at the coins, pass on.
Once in a while a child
or even a grown-up will pick up
one of the coins, study it,
feel it, put in back.
And sometimes one of them
will pick up the coin
and study it and take it away.
When that happens
(and strangely enough
it doesn’t happen that often)
another coin appears
to take its place.
There are always, must
always be, seven coins.
The man smiles at us as we pass by.

10 February 2017
People die all the time.  
That’s what time is for.  

10.II.17
THE OTHERS

The cast-off characters
in one’s mental life
where do they go?

We all have them,
don’t pretend
you don’t pretend.

Pirates of the amygdala,
the sheba queens
from summer dreams,

where do they go
when we forget?
They grow beyond us

to distant planets
that never forget.
think of the galaxies

we have populated
with those vital
beautiful companions
some unremembering parents dared to call our imaginary friends.

11 February 2017
LIGHT

Light makes me
remember the dark
light makes me.

11.II.17
Have I been alive an hour already? What came before this waking? Who was I then and why, before I woke and thought I was me, using as evidence the beautiful face of my wife asleep beside me? I think the soul carries many passports and comes and goes by night but lingers sometimes a few hours in this ordinary me.

11 February 2017
theb Sacred Law of Unicity:

Say it so it isn't so.

11.II.17
When you gesture towards the real as your evidence it betrays you every time — what is Maldon now, a fight remembered, courage, salt crystals salt crystals?

11 February 2017
Take snow
as mist made actual
a child’s version of fog
you can actually touch
catch on your tongue tip
hold in your hands,
shape.

And it’s still there
when the sun comes out
and the sun is never brighter
than when she shines on snow
and all that such strange
mist has formed
or you have made.

12 February 2017
WRITING

How slow the pen
to plow the earth,
each furrow
a possible mistake
then who comes along
to sow what seed?
These written spells
we scratch right in
hardly knowing what
we or they are saying.

12 February 2017
Things fall because they’re things, they don’t share the secret levity that stands us up against the pull of whirling earth dancing us just slow enough to let us be.

12 February 2017
If there were words in it
where would it be found

a broken sundial in moonlight
standing up through the snow

an urn made of cement
full of earth but no flowers

deer by the driveway eating corn
things take care of themselves

people say I’m out of place
language is always foreign language

I was born here if I was born at all.

12 February 2017
I heard what the light said

sky vein slit

healed right away
but ere it did
(was it you?)

a world full of snow
sought its way down

our whole vegetable kingdom
immersed in firm water

we can walk on it.

12 February 2017
Because the *Only*

is a star in the mist

or a cloud alive

it spews a fine

influence upon us

in which we grow

native to this place

as once we were

Moses and Gilgamesh

holding up to

are they gods? a bowl

of rusted iron.


(from old note, 30.XII.11)

12 February 2017
The Cloud Mother
watch her pass over
quick from the west—

new from the window,
our other mind.

(old note, 27.II.12)
12 February 2017
Biology is pilgrimage

and a hair
is a pilgrim
reaching
out of the body
always further
to reach the light.

(after an old note, 23.XII.12)
12 February 2017
I reach out and sometimes touch a stranger’s skin.
It feels like glass.

(old note, 17.XII.11))
12 February 2017
THE TROUBLE WITH IDOLS

(why Moses masters) is that once you have a fixed image of God you stop describing whereas we will never know God until we have said everything we can ever say.

(from old note, December 2011)
12 February 2017
[BILLIE DREAM 11 FEB 17 INTERLINEAR]

I’m in a hotel with my daughter and three of her friends. It’s close to checkout time, and we must pack up quickly. I’ll probably miss my plane and may have to pay for an extra night at the hotel, so I’m anxious. I’ve brought too many clothes by far, and I fill the suitcase quickly. Then I realize there are still many things in the closet, including a bag I forgot about. It has little treasures in it from Lydia’s childhood, a few of which were gifts from her grandmother. I fear Lydia will be mad at me for throwing them away, but she agrees she doesn’t need them and they have to go. There’s just one she wants to save, a little figurine of an elephant, but she says she doesn’t need the base and detaches the figure from it. Then she decides not to take it at all. There’s a piece of weaving from Crete in the bag too, a pillow cover, many shades of red. For a moment I hesitate to give it away, but I leave it in the bag. I think I’ll remember it if it’s important, and don’t need the thing itself. The girls are going to do something together, an outing, and invite me to come too, but I think I’ll stay at the hotel secretly, with my new notebook. My notebook is beautiful, a tallish rectangle with a painting on the cover. I’m holding it open. The paper feels deep and textured, marvelous to my fingers.

Three thousand years ago on Crete you wore this dress, wore it and wore it centuries till the cloth wore away, back and sides and skirts and hem, all but this little bit that covered your lap. Your lap on Crete — from it your daughter and all her girl friends came, all your children with no inconvenience to you born and bred and taught the rituals, the reds of the weaving, madder and murex, made their blood, your pale thought watching the sea gave them skin. Your silences taught them music.

And that big valise in the closet. the one you always almost forget, once a century you lug it out and open it and all the stuff you ever thought or made spills out
and the girls grab and fondle and discard—your daughter tries her best but it is hard to take a memory apart, just let it go. Now this red rag is all that’s left of who you were—apart from all these girls, of course, hotels full of them, airline stewardesses shyly touching your hand as they guide you to a seat where they can see you as you guide them all through the sky. You can doze in your window seat, knowing a girl wants so many, many things, wants them so she can throw them away.

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[TAKE 2]

She opens her new notebook
its cover is red like everything else that matters in this world of hers.

She lays her palm softly on the open page—it is rich and complicated, soft, sensuous, touching it, even or especially so gently,
makes it feel a little naughty, like stroking someone through their clothes, she blushes and goes on feeling, stroking, page after page.

and when she gets to the back cover at last she flips through again like an ordinary book, no surprise to find every page full of words.

12 / 13 February 2017
Sometimes we guess wrong
then the alligator comes
leaping out of the legend.

Strange are the beliefs of the City—
bibles bother us, wants proliferate,
warnings, red carpet glamor,
and at night glitz in heaven,

all the deities live in comfort
in one neighborhood or other,
and blind Atheos itself
curls snug in the stock exchange.

We think we’re buying
shoelaces or diamond rings
but we’re just feeding this immense
guesswork of the System.

Animals are those who live without belief
the teacher said. Every now and then
they say something you can actually use.

13 February 2017
Do you think a girl would do that alone on a mountain or a boy in a little neighborhood park pencil in hand, on the back of an envelope? Is that how it always begins, alone with an image in mind you must make perfectly clear?

2. Be simple about it — we have come to a time when women make the best art. Exceptions, of course. But if you want a picture go to a woman, one maybe just beginning — the less she has done already the more she can do.

3. Go to the woman and plead her your story — soon the museums will be full. The magic wand has passed into their hands. At last the better half of humankind discloses.
13 February 2017

[VALENTINES]

Vale
says Be Well
be strong
and meant Fare well
god-be-with-ye
god-by-you

and so on Valentine’s
the heart
beating for love,
beaten with love’s
refusals and strange
welcomes

when out of all
uncertainty
some self says you!
and means it,

just you
and no other

then we are strong
and some god is with us,
farewell to doubt,
then we are strong indeed.

14 February 2017
A VALENTINE FOR CHARLOTTE

How I went finding
your way in me
was the loveliest journey,

Rhine and Rhône and cool mistral
seacoast of Bohemia
and almost all the way to Nashawena

finding your calm your clarity—
love teaches one lover what the other knows
long education of the heart

till most of what I know is you.

14 February 2017
Halfway through the month
the have-it habit
is strong as start.

   When a moon
is over,
   shouldn’t the appetite
relax, darken a little,
smudge desires?

Doesn’t seem
a month has anything to do.
Which is why February
is such a puzzle, the four
neat sevens of it, god on goddess
rayed, luminous, symmetrical.
Peculiar. Only once a year
can anything be complete.
I am morning again, I ponder
perfection all the way to noon
then the muzzle lets me drop.

14 February 2017
ON A PICTURE OF STONES

(sent by Dorota)

he weight of them —
how can colors weigh so much,
they pull me down to a decent ground
a winter camp of the mind
with heat inside inside

the heart of a stone is always warm —
that’s where fire’s stored.
Magia. Magic means
we are pulled inward
pulled together
all of us approaching
one another as we approach center.
A rock works that way.

14 February 2017
I’m in a classroom full of students, young men. I’m the only girl, but I don’t really notice that at first. One wall is all glass, looking out on the forest. There are also guys in trees outside, at the edge of the forest. The professor is lecturing - he’s quite strict and I know I could get thrown out for talking, but I have to know what the guys are doing in the trees. They are looking intently down into the forest as if waiting for an event. There’s a boy sitting next to me and one in front of me and I whisper and ask “what are those guys doing in the trees?” They both answer, whispering too - they’re excited about what’s happening outside. The tell me the guys outside are waiting for something called a Fibonacci event. There will be a sudden illumination of the pattern of the whole universe. Now something is happening inside the classroom. It’s an assignment but I can’t quite hear what the prof is saying. The students begin moving around. I see Jaan on the far side of the room and think maybe he can explain, but he is looking so intent I don’t want to disturb him. I get up and walk around and realize the men have made small gatherings of objects, architectural, all over the room - structures made of stones and books and branches, pieces of glass. I realize that the men have internalized the universal pattern, something like a Fibonacci sequence, and are able to make things spontaneously in harmony with this mystical math. I look out the window and now we are at the edge of the ocean. The water is heavy and deep, stormy, high waves, very dangerous. There’s a risk of drowning, but still, I think it would be good to take a quick swim. I’m scared but it excites me to appear brave in front of the men.

And that is what it really means to the the only woman in the world. Fact. Every woman at every moment is the only woman in the world. Fact. That’s why it hurts so much. Why it excites. The sea belongs to her because it touches every part of her and is dangerous. Of course she must. Childbirth hurts so much because she’s giving birth to the whole world. Men are so stupid, they look elsewhere for their miracles. They sit in the trees not realizing the miracle is the trees. Fact. The forest. They wait for something they can name and count and lecture on and sell, they build little replicas of what can’t be, can’t because they can’t see what is all round them. Knot-browed they study the ground, so serious, stern.
never bothering to worship the shadows
their own bodies cast. The shapes
she gave them. The only woman in the world
is nervous, the way we get nervous
when we’re among blind people. What
world is this that’s come out of her?
Leap into the sea and be the only thing there is.

14 February 2017
[BILLIE DREAM INTERLINEAR]

I’m alone in a room with a big glass aquarium. I’m alarmed there are three dead creatures in the aquarium - a frog and a lizard and a fish, lying on stones at the bottom. Then I notice a pulse in the throat of the frog, he is still alive. I’m a scientist and I’m supposed to diagnose what happened here. Suddenly I see how simple it is, someone has let the aquarium run out of water. I realize with horror and shame that it was me - I was responsible for the water and I let it dry out. I rush to fill a pitcher with water and I’m crying. The crying slows me down and I realize I must not grieve over the creatures that are dead and quickly save the ones still living. As the water gushes into the pitcher I have a beautiful image of that same water that will soon be pouring into the aquarium restoring life to everyone. I can actually feel the relief and joy of one fish as water pours in over him, indescribable bliss.

The patient sits, hands the doctor a card. It is the Tarot trump called The Star. It shows a woman up to her hips in a clear stream lifting clear water in a glass pitcher. What am I to do with this, the doctor asks. Press it with your fingers. He does so and the picture starts to move, the water gleams, gushes from the pitcher, pours out over the woman herself and the shores and a myriad animals start appearing, lapping, leaping, sporting through the glistening, drinking, washing the living and the dead. The woman on the card is ecstatic, smiles, glows, sometimes seems to be water herself, one substance what she is and what she does. The woman at the desk smiles too, quietly speaks to the doctor, See, now everything is alive again. It is too much to expect a doctor to understand. But she’s content when he plucks a Kleenex to dry his hands.

14 February 2017
If there were only a little more to tell you. Finches squabbling. Galapagos. *Children of the Paradise* on the tube, who knows all those people on the street, why are they walking one way, where to we used to say. If only we knew what we meant back then, the bronze black leopard by the entrance to the zoo, the trolleys on Nostrand Avenue, the girl on the steps. I’m sure I haven’t told you enough yet, it is kind of you to wait while I try to clear my way through this overgrown meadow wth animals calling out on all sides, why do so many creatures know my name?

14 February 2017
It’s like waiting all night for breakfast, get a tune-up, watch the moon wane. Gibbous. A word to wake your uncle. Liberty, clothes around your ankles even. Math was my best subject in school because it had nothing in it to understand. Operations on no flesh. So the long night is here again, I think like a child and snore like a man. My mother had a license but never drove, not even once. Things are better when you can but don’t. Once I saw an eagle skim low over the river I knew that I was here for good.
14 February 2017

The vagary, the Valkyrie
the wavering
between dead and living

we are momentary
certainties
adrift
across creation
standin’ in the need of prayer
the song we can’t sing.

2.
Strong elapses. Dogs
who can’t hunt,
fathers kill their daughters
bleat about honor,
stuff about shame.
She escaped from rapists
ran home and her father killed her.

That was the dream, doctor,
but I read it in the paper
and could not sleep again.
14 / 15 February 2017

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Rapture ready
future of deponent verbs
where will we talk and when,
speaking is moonshine,
is midsummer snow.

14 / 15 February 2017
Where can we go
to be alone together.
Open the rock and find me
he said, come to me
and never leave.
Your body is a pebble of marble
washed forward and back by the surf,
your body is a flame
flickers on the window of
the only house for miles.
I follow you
the only way I can
here space turns into time
I follow like a tree.

14 / 15 February 2017
Magia: 

She doesn’t know
the bond is formed
by merest touch

now I can ride
the green rail of light
into her secret city

speak her secret name.

14 / 15 February 2017
MAGIC

Magic is a dark house
with no kitchen and no bath

magic is a daybed stood on end
sleep on it if you can

You bring your own water
to its well, your dreams

get lost in sand, in dust,
O magic is a cold moon

it sucks all your fire, magic
is where the elements go to die.

14 / 15 February 2017
IN THE THO-RANG, DARK BEFORE DAWN

Everything seems clear now. In the morning when I wake all the words will tremble, scramble, be hard to read.

Things do not stay so very long. The new sun scatters hopelessly all this news of night.

14 / 15 February 2017
Houses live along roads like cities along rivers. We’re always trying to get away. To get home.
Somehow this stone in my hand
is Solomon’s temple
and you are all his wives.
I was making up an alphabet
to spell the truth.

Then wind blew the little sticks away,
the twigs of Reason
I had laid out to tell.

Where does the word hide
when its letters are gone?

14 / 15 February 2017
I have come close
enough to count their heads
but not to read their faces.
They stand close to one another
like friends, they move
forward cautiously like enemies
in sneak attack.
Would it help me
if I could see their eyes?
Do they even have eyes at all?

15 February 2017
Trying to more formal do. Clanking of numbers from that old Greek machine. Cold compress soothes ache—Arabian zero quiets fever. I have built stanzas from zero lines on zero pages full of stars. The sounds come later when the heart wakes up and counts again, beating its long equation into silence.

15 February 2017
Guess what I mean when I say what I say. I am a book you are writing one of us says to myself. Meaning comes later, maybe, when the other me reads.

15 February 2017
The man who read his mail
fell up out of the old rosebush
not without scratches.
Water looks like rock from up here—
fear rivers and bridges. And rock
looks like sunshine in sunshine.
What are we doing, he wonders,
when we pick something up off the ground?
What intimate primordial bond
are we bending or breaking?
Leave everything alone — doesn’t
that make most sense? No answer
so he goes back to his morning mail.

16 February 2017
Suppose everything is where it is for a reason. Suppose everything has a reason. Suppose I touch lightly lightly the back of your hand—does that change the whole system? What system, you ask. Any answer would have to come to us from outside the system. And there is no outsid.

16 February 2017
Are there passages where the eye blinks skips a word or three, changes the meter of mind?

Write a text embedded with suvh leap-over moments so each reader reads a different story, a different truth.

16 February 2017
Casting a temple near to being.
A being is moral, a stone is simple morality itself.

Learn the rock way the attitude all ambient —

how sweet the crow cries managing the weather, swoops to the nutrient bears it to a high place to eat in peace above our turmoil.

To feed the birds is feeding the sky.

17 February 2017
BOUQUET

*from M&M*

White roses, pink too,
orchid purple pale,
meek green foot-soldiers
stand at attention among
gorgeous generalissimos,
 admirals, ambassadors
faithful as Kandinsky
from Color right to us.

17 February 2017
When it’s right
not to wait a minute longer
dreams lap up over the jetty
and soak your legs.

Wet-socked homeward
capable of everything —
the water of dream
is a permanent ink.

17 February 2017
Waiting for the city
to come
streetless to our trees

its many-mindedness
alone with leaves

then would I walk
old-fashioned as a mirror
and know everything again

and get it right this time.

18 February 2017
LA JEUNESSE

Dangerous rooftops
too close to the stars
but there we lay
tilted towards perdition
touching ourselves or each other
with fingers influenced
from that beyond up there.
Chimney stacks hilltop shrines—
the Bible saw us
and we were damned to love.

18 February 2017
I remember everything except what happened. That was no business of mine.

18.II.17
Extraordinary measures before breakfast: sunrise over the whole continent starting from Boston, light abounding. Nothing hidden but motivation—not even the moon shows that.

18 February 2017
The primal dark
of course is
the dark inside our clothes

or the dark
spread thighs disclose
or deep inside

the chest — we
can hear the real dark
beating there.

18 February 2017
Things rise again
from their unlife.
Portraits on the wall
of ancestors who never were.
Children in the garden
with no grass no flowers no trees.
A single vine
dangles from heaven,
dares is to climb.

18 February 2017
THE NINE OF WANDS

Four stretchers in shadow, each made from two staves with cotton slung between the. An old man leans on a staff watching the four patients on the stretchers. It is a field hospital, a lazaretto, taking care of the wounded in the strangest of all wars. When a soldier is struck he falls asleep, and sleeps and sleeps until some time built into his wound wakes him. Wakes her. How quiet the fighting is outside. The old fellow, a doctor maybe, or just an orderly or weary veteran watches. But what is he thinking? What do wakers think of sleepers or doctors of the healthy? For there are two races on this weeping planet, one who mostly sleep and one who mostly wake. But see what this war contrives: I have been asleep so long my dreams seem like combat, seem as if I still am on the battlefield of love.
THE SEVEN OF SWORDS

I wish I could tell you about the seven of swords but it is not licit to speak of this card too clearly, or even show an image of it in the deck.

For swords come in all sizes, and even the smallest do what the big ones do, pierce, analyze, understand.

Think: the French call orgasm *la petite mort*, the little death. Does that imply that death is the Great Orgasm? Please, don’t quote me, I’m only asking.

Think about arrows, pen knives, machetes, tailor’s pins, needles, mosquitoes, fangs, scalpels, microscopes, lances, shark’s teeth, spears. Think of how he slimmest pin prick feels.

Then learn Hebrew and understand the book, learn Tibetan and understand the silence.
ZWISCHENLAND

1.
Tween time twixt time
face over the midway
smiling at our shortcomings,
circus planet, vale of tears.

No one can run fast enough
throw a tattered baseball
through a wall, preach us
a new gospel so we listen.

Or we listen and do nothing.
That is what sleep proposes
to cure or what supposed to
when we first began to rest

on earth a time and stand the rest.

2.
Why bother with the sea
when you can drown in tears
as Diane might have written once
back when poets were allowed
to have emotions, and then some.
Now language traps whatever feelings we have left.

Don’t be bitter—
it’s hard to digest your dreams,
big bellyache in the dark.

3.
Go back and start again.
Carnival. Mardi Gras.
Ash Wednesday. Heide Hatry’s portraits of the dead limned from their own ashes.
Mountains across unfrozen river. The act of tempering our Matter shown on the card,
Tarot, heat and cold, blood,
unfrozen river, Our metal fused. Forged. Closer now,
Blue sentences. Oboe recital.
Christmas camel waiting in Berlin.

18 / 19 February 2017
As if the air itself
did all the breathing
and we just let it
move in sand out —

or isn’t that the way
it really is, things
on their long march
carrying us with them

from the sea of the beginning?

19 February 2017
CHASTITY

Chastity
is a closed dictionary
a mirror veiled on the wall
a curtained window
a horse with no saddle,
a sunbeam lost in lush grass.

19 February 2017
If we knew how to define
we would have more friends.
But do we want them?
Hungry eyes around a dying fire.

19 February 2017
Protecting jungles
where unknown alkaloids
sleep in peace.
Deep in flowers
what unknown toxins
we'll need next
to harm or heal.
Every substance that exists
is both a cause and a cure.

19 February 2017
If I take off this body and put on another or another’s will the wind still know me, the deep still eat the corn laid out? An dwill beasts be?

19 February 2017
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*remembering R.C..926-2005*

The last clarinets
hoot in the dawn
the gift of music
in this meek country
to which love seems
to compel us
as if it were day.

19 February 2017
DARMA

Bach finally
lets me see —
through sound
a forest and that tall
person not young not old
walking ahead of me
leading me on
as long as I have
life to follow.

19 February 2017
Bito
1. The venom of healing sidles through our consciousness — before we know it it is day. This day. The only one.

2. It could be the tree it could be me differences are elusive some move some stand still.

3. Cursive habits of the maple Cufic catalpa. Who are we when we only listen?

4. Frost tests the mirror. Fraud said Dante viler than violence. Through all distortions I see my face, my fraudulent identity.
5. When you’re asleep
anyone could lie beside you —
we call such a person a dream
and pretend we slept alone.

6. Write the morning full of birds
though not one crow answered my call.

7. Forgive me my longevity,
I’m still waiting for breakfast.

8. But daylight is pure calligraphy,
mosaic sky, great dome of thinking
luminously blue. say it simple,
yesterday a scatter of snowdrops
sudden under Susan’s tree.

9. To be
is to be beheld,
partnership with the void,
glance off the mirror
no one there —
seek me only where you are.
10.
So few ready to ascend
yet the escalator
is always running.

11.
I was all ready to forgive myself
when I woke.
Do that little thing for me,
be me while I sleep.
Carve that on my stone.

20 February 2017
Every instrument is its own creed, believes in itself like a knife, the endless chance of getting it right.

20 February 2017
How dark memory is
like evening wind
in a leafy tree
trying to forget
where it’s coming from,
where it must lead.

20 February 2017
I dream I am in bed with someone. I see a little bat, white, hovering near me. I'm surprised that it's so sweet, not scary at all. It's hovering upright, and is feathery, with big brown eyes. He looks very vulnerable. I lift up my hand, palm up and he lands on my hand. Now he's more like a small owl. He only has one wing though, or maybe the wing is broken, but as he sits on my hand the wing is healing. I try to wake my companion to see the bird, but he won't wake up. Now the bird is flapping his wings and wants to fly away. I know I can only hold him for a moment more. I'm calling quietly to my companion, wake up, wake up, but instead he wakes me up.

No bat is white. Fact.
The man who sleeps beside you is not a man. Strange.
What have you been doing while you sleep? At night, have you noticed, all dreamers are young, the same exact age as when they first began to dream. All the later stuff is just made up by thievish time and other people — imaginary one and all.
You are dreaming: that is fact enough. The bat is the pale hand of a girl who wants to be your lover, and you let her just a little, a little while. I don't think she ever wants to leave you or you to wake. Love is like that, pale, always with one wing lame
or broken, needing you.
Pal extended, you welcome
her, sroke her, she flutters,
you do too, your night
is a mirror. You are sweet
with love but then an outside
person wakes you.
I saw the whole thing,
I am the white witness,
my wing too is uneasy,
hurts, I flutter
awkwardly back into dream.

20 February 2017
To touch
    the other side
of self,
    the brilliant engine
of the not-quite Other —
listen to the church bells
from no church,
    the drone
of meaning in every bed,
café.
    Work is just an excuse
to stop thinking,
    a reprieve
from who you are

    and then the night
falls on you alone.

21 February 2017
Sometimes it actually says

Here is somewhere else.

A game they play with their eyes pretending to see to look at one another

look at me.

We have not yet arrived at where we stand.

Alone, we might have made it.
But in company
there is no resting place.

With so many
there is no being.

Such things we remember
on the way to being

nowhere at all.

21 February 2017
If it could right out of its shell
the sun would say who she really is
but light is such a veiling, the bright
makes her invisible, a violin
playing in hurricane, steel works,
a voice speaking into a hollow tree.
That’s me, all bark and no bast,
all beast and no breast, no hope
and all the hammers of Niflheim
pounding on all the anvils in hell.
You can tell I’m striving to find
some kinship with my sister Sun.
But family is the root of terror,
the only thing you can ever really
break is your poor mother’s heart.

21 February 2017
How you felt:
broken bone
some hairs
torn out.
Starlight
caught in a glass.

20/21.II.17
Bronze
being an alloy
mestizo
half-breed
méti
remembers.

Bronze remembers.
What is cast in wax
the bronze remembers.
What the burin chiseled
metal holds. Its mind
is a wound. A wound
always remembers.

21 February 2017
SUITS OF THE TAROT

Three are made of metal
one is made of wood
one could be glass or pottery
or even wood so
only two have to be metal.
But one of them could be leather
and a spear be sharpened wood
hardened in the fire.
So no one has to be metal.
Except the heart_ a mass
of flaming gold.

21 February 2017
A doorway

is a wolf way
suddenness,
change:

stepping
onto broadloom
steps into the stream.

A room is a river,
the carpet sweeps you away,
you float in an armchair.

It all begins.
You are a child again
with everything to learn
everything to do.

All for you.

22 February 2017
First flower you ever
how could forget?

The gospel
writes itself
in you if you
write it out
before you forget.

Just like the flowers
under the tree
where snow melted
just enough
to let them come,
white, white,

but how many
petals you’ll
never remember.

22 February 2017
What does my friend have for me today?

Change the needle
cchange the thread
the shirt you wear
is made of wood,
your brain is brass
with alloys rich.
your tongue is steel.

Of all substances
that exist
a self is made,
find the molybdenum in you,
find the waterfall,
the eagle’s nest, cougar’s
pawprint in the snow
big as a saucer, find
the roofter, tarpit,
fireplace, temple gong,
find the gold.

22 February 2017
The Suez of the mouth
the crossing
from the common
Mare Nostrum
to the magical straits
the selfic waters
down where the meaning
ripens and renews.

Drink your nice water
from the clean glass
and let it trickle
down to Arabia the Glad.

22 February 2017
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Of stages of the Work
the Exaltation that comes
before the After Thing
when the bowl cracks,
the camel bladder
full of unguent
pours over the inlaid table
where fruit is piled:
grapes of two races,
nectarines, plums.
Smell of neroli
nonetheless in the air.

Are you listening, young alchemist?
This is what you need
and a trowel for the lard,
a girl to hold the mirror
right up under your chin.

Saint Julien’s bell is tolling now,
the Age of Faith
is almost over but not quite.
Scoop from the river
going with the direction of the flow
a leather dice cup
and drink it in one gulp—
now the Age of Art begins.
So you gave me the waterfall
the alpenstock the percolator
we carry so blithely, lightly,
all the animals of earth,
they all think! Not all of them
breathe, though, breath
is an extra, a special grace
poured I suppose from the stars
or beyond, a hand on your arm
to help you up the long stairs.
DRACO MIHI EST

for Vesna

The dragon you gave me
goes everywhere I stay at home,
it's breath is quiet in the morning
full of vocabulary, he roars
at noon to shield us from the sun
and all afternoon is quiet, watching
the currents mingle in the muddy
river that passes for my mind.
Then he spreads his leather wings
and it is night, the sparks of his breath
we mix up with the stars, and he is far
in his own way, a beast of everywhere.
He’s watching me at this very moment
making sure I almost get it right.

22 February 2017
Praise
in such forms
Admire me
is all the Sun says

all the rest
she grants without a word.

23 February 2017
Encomium yes
speakful cautionary
loop the line in the tree
then run a bird
along the wire

make it close to the sky
lead nowhere
so that it goes,
goes —

all we wanted
was to go there too,
man on the rock face
girl on the lawn.

Remember? Something
was always missing,
a feather fall’n,
a hum heard.

23 February 2017
Is it here
clear
ture
or just itself
alone
among the endless branches?

23 February 2017
Close to it, Magic, the snow
all melted from your touch
and the tin basin
rattling in the sink
as tepid water gushes in —

this was your city, brava,
bridge and opera house
the languid stride of busy demoiselles,
nothing was mine, nothing
belonged to me.

Yet you let me
see and touch, subway and semaphore,
cool basements quick with silverfish,

hard to fit through the doors
but the windows easy,
cuchifritos and falafel,
all I needed was an envelope
come through the mail to me
at my address, and I had one!
but it never came, me,  
I was only an altar boy 
but the church not yet built—

why am I telling you all this, 
why bother you if I too 
am just part of the weather?

23 / 24 February 2017
THE METHOD

There is joy in it too
shampoo, smell of ink,
from the tavern door the dancers
spill across the street
sober with deliberate nakedness.

Bird cry — rufous towhee?
mockingbird who masters
all the languages of air? —
joy, insistent, shout of a flower,
the noisy differences!

Heart on fire, women
deciphering their maiden names
what they meant, what they
themselves are supposed to mean,

after all, we are only colors
so we sold all the books
kept all the words,
dirt road into the woods,
park where the trees park
turn off the radio and begin.
This is any time but now.
You are anyone but you.
VERA HISTORIA

Mild enough morning to out
sun partakes!
Seat cushions in Canaan!

But the Queen’s smile was gone,
waist in the east
my arm almost around —

o smile at me again, seashell!
lave my cranky fingers in your hair,
maid far, be close!

So the ocean disguised as sunlight
shone on me over the blue forest,
the air remembered all my sins.

but I forgot, and peaceful as a bone,
a shoulder blade, say, I rested
purple in my easy chair, for in this island
every man a king at the steps of Her throne. Something like that the breeze said — mild day in Feverway, a delicate miracle.

I hope you were all listening, it was usury tht wrecked the west but how they glisten in thsi morning sun

the three gold globes of the Medici!

24 February 2017
= = = = =

Never pull
away from what is true

how do you know

you listen soft
inside until

and then it’s so.

` 25 February 2017`
Calling flowers by the wrong names
can you sin against Colors?

Kandinsky seems to say so—
and how does a line betray a shape?

Walk into that amateur abstract on the wall
and see how much gets tangled in your hair.

25 February 2017
Mind not easy wind in trees

by sympathy can a word silence other words?

Can the eagle carry the clifftop away?

But once there was a mountain and.

25 February 2017
Proportional, like the sky.
Rational, like fire.
Dullness of organized diversity — university. Rhyme always tells lies. Friction lights the lamp burns Cupid’s shoulder.
Let them do what they want over there. Here lie down and be at peace— forgiveness is a kind of mattress.

25 February 2017
A jeweler’s loupe
focused on the Moon

we see the crags
the crystal cliffs
tracks in the snow
where no one goes.

This little stone
you gave me
you found in some sea

in these crosshairs
the Sun rises again and again.

25 February 2017
The rapture?
It’s the road out there
glistening in morning sun.

The Second Coming
happens every second.

Once Christ came
he’s always here,
because that’s where we are —

he seemed to float to heaven
because we looked away
from one another and stared at the empty sky.

Christ is the one standing next to you right now.

25 February 2017
We are the outside
the chance the opportunity
without us the Sun will not rise.
That is what the Enemy
is always trying to make us forget.

25 February 2017
PIGALLE

I remember it when it was when. The neons were old and the colors are still dull. y surmises outside kept me from in. Looking is conversation, must be two way. Rain on a July night, wandering back down to the darker terrain, imagining nothing. Rough wall of houses. Doorways empty. Doors in dull colors. Pleasure best to run from pleasure. Night the noblest mistress, Novalis’s. Nerval’s. Even mine.

25 February 2017
Canvas is to painting
as page to poem
les plus belles pages de Baudelaire

remember another city
because of it I was.

I was the ground
it was the figure—

you decipher it
but never look at me—

I am rough and pale and incomplete
but how could it be if not for me?

25 / 26 February 2017
Sad wake from angry dream
emotions bleed into each other
no membrane in between them

last day of old year
nine bad things cluster
a day of danger and damage

if there were flowers
they would change their colors
to confuse us

if there is snow
as they predict
it will probably be red.

25-26 February 2017
Two honey jars on the desk from New Zealand

empty but sticky inside—
so be thankful for

everything the finger knows.

25 / 26 February 2017
Is there anything left of what we meant before the dream? Does it all change in the night, the way stars never stop and the wind never comes back?

I want more of identity than this! A continuity, a sense of skin inside the clothes and human beings outside the house. Dream on, I left all my hopes in Leaves of Grass.

25 / 26 February 2017
They wrote the book
to show
eyou don’t know.

Every treatise
avows ignorance.

Heraclitus to Husserl,
“just don’t know.”

And then the fun begins,
the school bell rings
and memorized nonsense
fills the daylight hours.

_O and the night_
comes, full of fear.
And that we really do know.

25 / 26 February 2017
Kindness is God in us —
is that enough?
To start with, certainly.
Loving kindness to one another —
and truth will come later,
loud as sunrise.

25 / 26 February 2017
Caution later.
I am a crow,
I come to tell.

Now you know all
I am.

Piece by piece
the way the wind
or beak

each chosen
its own weight
own resistance

to be lifted up
to be of use

leafwise
mulch of time

this leaf too
compiles,

moorlands,
living matter.
26 February 2017

= = = = =

Are these spells
or less
or listen
what comes after

the future shapes the past
till we almost know
where have we been

the sun only reminds.
Have I come again
to the hand

the doorknob
is this the cloth at last?

26 February 2017
Gnosis kenosis
call the paper sTong.pa.nyid
and begin.

Every knowing grows from emptiness —
evidence is always something else.

The empty
is where it all begins.
And into it in peace dissolves.

Out of emptiness
each one came.

You know their names,
trace back from the echo
to the first sound
built into your somehow bones.

26 February 2017
THE FATHER

Reaching for the father —
ointment for neck nerve,
gold-capped plume, the plain
fact of paper, face in the mirror
not his, scarcely mine.

Reaching through the lines the ‘blood’
leaves, maps of this very
minute’s ancestry,

    fire
in the hearth.  Heart.

_Tengo dolor de cabeza_
he’d say, and my nape heard.
Hears.  Listen to everyone
and never decide —
that is your birth’s way,
birthright, Libra my lamb.

As once I was.
    Now a headache
holds my hand,
guides the meaning
through all the agencies of making sense.
I have a headache too, papa,
I am a ferris wheel inside,
a smoking campfire ill-extinguished,
a deer as they used to say
at gaze.

_Hunger is catching,_
that’s what the plume said
on the soft paper,
    once you have eaten
you will never not eat again.

Thus we fell from the stars.
Oh? Last night I saw Orion
for the first time in years.
So beautiful, arm and leg and belt
between, bright star of sword tip
or sacred drop, star semen,
gleaming over our exile.

Sob. Sorry for myself,
I note the traces on the lawn
of the marauding bear, meek skunk,
everything alive and why can’t I be?

Fire needs air and men need sleep—
it is the one thing can
sometimes cure their anger,
sleep the Irish penicillin.

He said it but the ache was mine. Never took aspirin, the sight of people through the window moving in bright afternoons was medicine enough for him. Whereas I breakfast on the dictionary and still am hungry the livelong day.

27 February 2017
Every man has to come to that point too,

the orphan moment when for the first time you begin to know

who he was who made you begin thinking in the body of your mother.

And when will the moment come when you know her who fed your thought and wove your cloth?

27 February 2017
So much noise
in so simple world.

The trees talk too
but only if you listen.

Under the engine roar
the silence speaks.

The pleasant sound
of nothing happening.

There are even churches
where they’d believe me —

such things you hear!

27 February 2017
QUAKER LULLABY

Half hypnotized
by happiness

sun on the lawn
beginning green.

And northbound cars
though on the way to work

seem frisky animals
glad to be going.

Look out there and see
the real peace inside thee.

27 February 2017
When you go out into the wilderness you must be looking for yourself because you're the only person there.

27 February 2017
IN THE AFTER

I’m thinking.

But am I still thinking.
I mean is it me who is thinking,
the same me I have in mind
when I say me?

I remember being me —
is that enough to go on?

I remember lots of things,
Washington’s wooden teeth,
Bellini died in 1835 and had blue eyes,
I can hear in my mind’s ear
or somewhere but I hear it
Joan Sutherland singing the Casta Diva from his Norma
or not her but a recording of.

But are all the things I remember
somehow members of me,
mine to fondle or forget?
Who can say who a stray cat belongs to,
the kind I used to see in Paris and Darjeeling?
I mean someone used to see,  
I’m guessing that was me.  
Me then. But I’m up against the same wall,  

memory is of no avail,  

Is the me of then the same as the I of now?  

Facts are stray cats, memories are stray cats,  
sometimes they scratch, sometimes they sleep,  
sometimes they lie in your lap ad you can’t tell.  

I can’t tell. But here I am, busy telling.  
Am I me because you hear me?  

Whitman wrote to the reader: “you, who are holding me now in your hands.” Is that the only ‘me’ or the real me or who did he think he was and who do I think I am to say his words to you, you who are probably tired of me in your hands. You’ll push me off your lap soon and brush your hands clean.  

Dandruff and fur: memories.  

Memory no proof of identity.
What I’m saying now sounds like the me I remember being, the way I used to talk or think. But is this thinking? Would Wittgenstein call it that, or Heidegger?

I remember holding a book in my hands that Heidegger had inscribed to a dear friend. He signed it, in ink that looked brownish by then, “Martin.”

What does thinking do?

Does what we call thinking confer identity?

I guess I should stop thinking about the past me and find out who I am at present.

How to do that?

Talking?

Is talking the shadow of thinking, or the other way round?

28 February 2017
1. Why is waiting so like wanting?

2. Miraculous fluid gushes through our veins.

Ichor the gods call it but we know it as water carrying oxygen so every part of us breathes.

3. Water is the miracle the scripture.

That’s why baptism is and abhisheka, sprinkling the holy simplicity of water, water is life.
4. That’s what I want lover says to lover,

give me your water and here is mine,

whatever we are pour into each other.

Wild romantics of the Inward Sea.

5. Everywhere I look water is hiding

in the branch and in the root earth and sky

we drink this air.

28 February 2017
ALUMINUM EVERYWHERE

the ordinary metal
the life we live on television

and in the mines of Cernagora
they found an adit to the sea,

said salt turned gold
before their eyes

NaCl $\rightarrow$ Au! astonished them
but metal, all metals, are frisky girls,

come from the other side of town,
any town, leap up and fill the sky,

the iron bird, the dragon of high noon
spitting fire and strewing
tears of pure platinum
over all our sad stories.

28 February 2017